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UNCLAS YEREVAN 001180

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR EUR/CACEN, OES

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: GOAM CONFIRMS NEW ROUTE FOR IRAN-ARMENIA ROAD

REF: YEREVAN 1066

[1](#)1. (U) Sensitive But Unclassified. Treat Accordingly.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Following the public outcry by local and international organizations (reftel), the GOAM confirmed June 30 that President Robert Kocharian has approved the alternative route for a new road which will connect Armenia's southernmost province with Iran. Environmental groups tell us they approve of the alternative route. The original proposal called for the road to pass through the Shikahogh forest preserve and incited uncharacteristically public criticism from the Minister of Nature Protection and a consortium of environmental and advocacy NGOs. According to reports, construction has already begun and the road will be put into service in 2006.

EVANS